

Racial Disproportionality in the Child Welfare System
Committee Minutes
June 16, 2005
10 a.m.

Participating Members: Pat Howes, Alfreda Singleton-Smith, Clara Anderson, Monique Busch, Lisa McGuire, Delores Kennedy-Williams, Megan Chaille , Ronnie Taylor, and Devina Jani.

The minutes had been distributed by email.

Jane and Angela had conflicting meetings but thought that we should continue our meeting as scheduled. Angela stopped by briefly on her way to another meeting.

The Vision, Mission and Goal Statements were reviewed and editorial corrections/changes were made. We need to compare our mission with Director Payne's mission. We need to ask ourselves these questions: Is there any conflict with our mission when compared to his? Does the mission have any negative connotation? Is the mission an accurate representation of the change we desire? How does our mission affect the family component?

GOAL: By the end of 2006 Indiana will have developed, communicated and initiated the implementation of a written, sustainable plan to reduce disproportional representation and disparities in outcomes for children of color within the child welfare system. The group thought that the goal is realistic and achievable.

There is a need for additional clarification of scope for the committee. At this point it is not clear about the involvement of DCS. It is our understanding that the administration is aware of the committee but Jane needs more information before presenting the committee to others.

The committee thought that the objectives on the committee scope should be used as a starting point for adding details for the outcomes that we want to achieve. It was agreed that we should work in sub-committees to develop the objectives further. After discussions the committee agreed that the five objectives should be worked on in two (2) phases.

Phase 1: Objective A, B, C & E would be worked on in phase I and objective D would flow more naturally after those objectives are achieved.

Phase 2: Service Delivery ~Goal

Approach – Complete Objective “D” last – develop sufficient delivery;

- *Practice different than stated*
- *Based on committee initiative*
- *Data*

1. Look at what has already been collected

Sub-Committees

Why sub-committees? We want to establish sub-committees around objectives to develop specific outcomes for each subject; each objective has its own suggested task outline.

- *Adequate Research*
- *Draft recommendations*
- *Pass level of scrutiny*
- *Realistic due dates*

Sub-Committees, leadership and specific focus *(Other committee members are encouraged to assist the sub-committee that you have an interest in).*

Objective A:

Membership: Megan, Monique and Ronnie

- **Data collection, analysis and dissemination**
 - a. Consistently collect data on the populations served at every point of service in child welfare.
 - b. Analyze data over time to determine patterns, trends, inconsistencies and changes.
 - a. Identify factors that contribute to disproportionality
 - b. Develop reports on the status of racial and ethnic representation in child welfare service areas.
 - c. Disseminate information about progressive or disturbing trends to the general public.
 - d. Based on data analysis, identify possible cultural bias that may affect the rate that children of color are disproportionately represented.

Ideas/Resource Tools for Research Committee:

1. *Summary of data needed from AFCARS, CFSR*
CFSR is also known as the Child and Family Services Review: It provides statistics by race.
2. *Federal goals as outlined by the CFSRs:*
 - *Permanency (Goal)*
 - *Safety (Goal)*
 - *Well-Being (Goal)*
3. *Practice Analysis:*
 - *What has worked* (Look at the existing Program Improvement Plan developed by Angela)
 - *Numbers*
 - *Strategies*
4. *Race Matters* Article – According to the data provided, it supports that Indiana is at the bottom of the list when compared to other states.

Objectives B & E:

Membership: Clara and Alfreda

- Increase awareness that Indiana has disproportional representation of children of color in Child Welfare Services.
 - Share reports about disproportionality on a regular basis
 - Make the child welfare service system aware of disproportionality issue.
- E. Promote public policies in the state that addresses disproportionality in child welfare.
 - a. Make recommendations for policy changes that will incorporate sensitivity, respect, and understanding of racial, ethnic and gender diversity.
 - b. Reorder funding patterns to support prevention and early intervention

Ideas Awareness and Policy Committee:

1. *Use model that was used by Commission to educate others. Frame message so people will hear it – avoid people shutting down.*
2. *Remain in public eye – every couple weeks in newspaper (Commission tactic – different than what we are doing, we are more internal and commission was very public).*

Objective C:

Membership: Delores and Lisa

- B. Training of all public and private professional who work with children and families.
 - a. Statistical realities
 - b. Research based interventions
 - c. Improve the cultural competence of public and private child welfare practitioners.

Ideas Training Committee:

1. *Cultural competency in the broad sense of the word.*
2. *Better communication is key to Better training*
3. *Weave training into entire curriculum*

August meeting – Subcommittees are encouraged to meet prior to the next full committee meeting. The sub-committees should recruit others to participate and come prepared to report progression thus far.

Ronnie Taylor presented a preliminary report on the data analysis. The full report will be provided in July.

Information provided by Ronnie

- 7 data sets – only 2 were useful
- 2001-2003

- Collectively race was not an issue why children had longer length of stay (LOS) because of economic status : given position is that race impacts economics
- Low variances – not everything was included
- Overall variability was 40%; variance 16%
- Collectively – the older the child the more likely increased LOS
- Group sample – over 10,000 = good power
- No conclusions could be made from data
- Data eludes that race is not a determine factor for why case managers remove kids from the home.
- Foster care vs. other places they could stay (foster care increase stay by 80 days)
- Did children go from secure to less secure (hospital to foster care)?
- Economically – person from skill labor family – decrease stay 56 days
- Economically – person from professional family – decrease stay 69.79 days
- Economically – person from clerical/office – decrease stay 28 days

Further breakdown of counties will be sent by Ronnie in the next week or so.

*Need to be cautious how this information/data is used because of the small number of variables that have been examined. For example, this is not taking into consideration types of abuse, risk factors, family risk factors, child problems, and/or family problems.

**Next meeting date for ENTIRE group will be Aug. 18, 2005 at 9:30 a.m.
Location to be determined.**

All sub-committees are asked to begin their assignment. It was suggest that some of the sub-committee meeting may be held by conference calls.